



CYNTHIA D. BANKS  
Director

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**COMMUNITY AND SENIOR SERVICES  
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

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*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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March 31, 2009

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**AUTHORIZATION TO ALLOCATE FUNDS FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM  
FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2009 – JUNE 30, 2014  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS AFFECTED) (3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The purpose of this Board letter is to request approval to execute contracts and allocate funds for the Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) for the five-year period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014, and to execute subsequent contract amendments within the contract term to increase or decrease contract amounts based upon contractor performance and available funding.

The DRP provides face-to-face mediation, telephone conciliations, and arbitration services for a wide variety of disputes. The services are designed to be less costly, less time consuming, less complex, and less intimidating than the court system and/or a trial and more accessible to the diversity of County residents, businesses, and organizations.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve funding allocations for each year of the five-year contract term in the amount of \$3,033,238 to be used for the service providers as indicated on Attachment A, effective July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Community and Senior Services (CSS), or designee, to negotiate and execute contracts on substantially similar form to Attachment B with 13 contractors for the dispute resolution services for a five-year contract term effective July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014. Overall funding for each contractor is subject to the availability of funds each Fiscal Year and the contractor's performance in meeting the goals of the DRP.

3. Delegate authority to the Director of CSS, or designee, to execute contract amendments as needed throughout the contract term effective July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014, to increase or decrease the maximum contract amounts in response to State revenue and based on contractor performance and the total funds available, provided that: (a) the total allocations do not exceed funding availability; (b) approvals of County Counsel as to form and the CEO are obtained prior to any such amendments; and (c) the Director of CSS, or designee, confirms in writing to the Board of Supervisors and the CEO within 30 days after such amendments have been executed.

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The recommended actions will enable CSS to continue to administer the DRP for the contract term beginning July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014. This program provides face-to-face mediation, telephone conciliations, and arbitrations to any Los Angeles County resident, business, or organization involved in a dispute. Services are provided by supervised, trained volunteers for disputes that both have and have not entered the court system.

Common disputes include consumer-merchant, personal injury, residential and commercial landlord-tenant, property damage, neighbor-neighbor, business-business, family/domestic, and workplace-related disputes. The program also provides services to at-risk youth through school, parent-child, and juvenile offender-victim mediations.

### **Performance Measures**

The DRP performance evaluation is aligned with the County's *Performance Counts!* The standard of performance measurement for program effectiveness is indicated by the number of disputes a contractor resolves. The Department will assess contractor's performance through analysis of monitoring reports produced by the CSS Contract Compliance Division.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended actions support the Countywide Strategic Plan Goal 1: Operational Excellence.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The DRP is funded through State civil court filing fees pursuant to the California Dispute Resolution Programs Act of 1986 which are collected in the DRP Special Fund established by the County. The estimated cost for this program in FY 2009/10 is \$3,033,238. There is no impact on the County general fund as DRP is fully financed by the DRP Special Fund. Funding for subsequent years will be budgeted in the DRP Special Fund.

## **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The current contracts are scheduled to expire on June 30, 2009. CSS released a Request for Proposal (RFP) in October 2008 to solicit proposals from non-profit organizations and government entities to provide dispute resolution services commencing July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014. The list of agencies in Attachment A that are being recommended for funding are in compliance with all Board and CEO requirements. The CEO has reviewed and concurred with the recommended actions.

## **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

On October 17, 2008, CSS released an RFP soliciting proposals from agencies to provide dispute resolution services. CSS advertised the RFP in local newspapers of general circulation such as *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Daily News*, and *Hoy*. CSS also sent letters of interest to a list of potential bidders in all districts from a database address list, as well as to current contractors. The RFP and all related documents were posted on the CSS public website at <http://css.lacounty.gov>.

A total of 14 entities submitted proposals in response to the RFP. Of the 14 that submitted proposals, 13 are being recommended for contracts. The agencies listed in Attachment A are those that are being recommended for funding based on these requirements: (1) met the minimum qualifications set forth in the RFP; (2) were found to be responsive; and (3) received a score of 700 (out of a total 1,000 possible) or higher for each proposal submitted.

The contract is not a Prop A contract; therefore, living wage laws are not applicable. CSS is not capable of providing dispute resolution services; therefore the services are contracted to other entities. The contract is solely for the provision of dispute resolution services.

## **Monitoring**

CSS Contract Compliance Division will ensure that all contractors are monitored for contract compliance, administrative, programmatic, and fiscal requirements on an annual basis. The DRP contracts are cost reimbursement contracts with an annual renewal based on performance.

## **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES**

Continuation of the DRP will allow contractors to continue to help resolve more than 6,000 disputes a year involving more than 12,000 County residents, businesses, and organizations.

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**CONCLUSION**

Upon Board approval, the Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors, is requested to mail one copy of the adopted Board letter to Carol Domingo, Program Manager, Contracts Management Division, CSS, 3175 West Sixth Street, Room 401, Los Angeles, CA 90020. If you need to contact Ms. Domingo, her telephone number is (213) 215-2564.

Respectfully submitted,

  
CYNTHIA D. BANKS  
Director

CDB:dl

Attachments

c: Raymond G. Fortner, Jr., County Counsel  
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller